

## **GREEN RIBBON OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE**

### **Recap of meeting October 7, 1999**

**Members in attendance:** Carole Bellew, Dick Brown, Nancy Coleman, Martha Eddison, Isabel Giraud, Robert Lindamood, Fran Mastroianni, David McGowan, Beth Rubenstein, Albe Simenas, Anne Strong, Robert Winters, Fred Yalouris City Staff Present – Lisa Peterson, Paul Ryder, Carlton Hart, Stuart Dash, Malaina Bowker

Beth welcomed the committee and then explained that the agenda for the evening included finishing their discussion of the passive uses, a more detailed explanation of the intensity of park uses by Paul Ryder and a beginning discussion of the final report. She then asked Stuart to update everyone where the committee had left off.

Stuart explained that at the last meeting the committee had introduced the idea of looking for a multipurpose rectangular field size so it could be used for sports like soccer, football, lacrosse, and field hockey.

#### **Park Use**

Paul Ryder explained what he believed to be the intensity of use for parks and fields in Cambridge. He stated that there was not a real need for more football fields, little league diamonds, basketball courts and tennis courts in the city because the facilities we had were sufficient. Multipurpose rectangular fields were the most needed recreational facility for organized active uses in the city. By increasing the number of these types of fields Paul stated that the Recreation department could accommodate the permit requests better and be able to keep a field out of rotation for a year, allowing the grass to grow and be healthy. These new fields would be able to accommodate many different sports like lacrosse, field hockey, and soccer. Paul added that a high school sized baseball field is also needed in the city, as the only baseball facilities that we have are not regulation size. When asked how many fields he thought that needed to be added Paul stated that there should probably be 3 or 4 more multipurpose fields in the city. He also said that there should be one more baseball field for high school use.

Questions were also raised about the need for a stunt park, another ice skating rink and a facility for rugby. Paul replied that the city had researched the possibility for constructing a stunt park a few years ago and they found that the kids didn't like using the manufactured facility as it was too boring which was a direct result of the manufacturers trying to lessen its liability. At that time the city also realized that no insurance agency would cover stunt parks. In addition, it wasn't clear if a stunt park would be utilized even if it were built. An enclosed ice skating rink operated by the city was not a priority either as there were staffing needs and building maintenance that could not be justified. Finally Paul stated that rugby was not permitted on any field in Cambridge as the sport caused more wear and more maintenance than any other sport.

#### **Passive Uses**

The committee then began discussing passive uses in the city. Martha commented that the city could make a big difference with smaller spaces if they were designed properly. Robert Winters suggested that by improving the "forgotten" places, e.g. traffic islands, median strips, street edges, etc. the city could be much more enjoyable and the cost would be minimal. A suggestion was also made to create a public garden with flowers and sitting areas in the city. Albe also recommended the city to begin a "big pot" program where citizens could request large planting pots to be placed in their neighborhood and they would maintain it. Some committee members wondered if there could be a public amphitheater or performance

space for impromptu plays and music. Paul Ryder stated that during the past summer the Human Services Dept began showing movies outside near the area youth centers. Community gardens also came up as a use that could occur in the city in more places. It was mentioned that one criteria for open space acquisition could be providing links to natural areas. Finally there was some discussion on implementation including: reviewing development projects for open space, zoning changes, improving the open spaces that currently exist, and establishing a trust for open space acquisition. It was discussed that these topics could be more appropriately addressed in future subcommittee work.

### **Committee Business**

Beth said that our current workplan probably needed to be revised some and she suggested that the workplan now have us finishing our meetings by November 18<sup>th</sup>. In order to accomplish this, she suggested that the committee focus on the recommendation priorities so it would be able to finish this in the next two meetings. She acknowledged that the committee would probably have disagreements during this prioritization, but that this was expected. The final meeting on November 18<sup>th</sup> would be a review of the draft text of the document. This text would be available to the committee by November 11<sup>th</sup>. Finally she stated that the Community Development Department would do the formatting.

Beth handed out a draft outline of the report and asked the committee to review and comment on it. She suggested that the committee bring their comments to the next meeting on Thursday, Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>.